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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE ESSEX INSTITUTE AND THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF SALEM AT THE TABERNACLE CHURCH, SALEM, FEBRUARY 12, 1909.

By Robert S. Rantoul.

We are met here, my friends, to pay our tribute of affection and respect to the remarkable man whose name is on all lips today. A tragic death has closed a stormy scene:

> "After life's fitful fever he sleeps well!
> "Nothing can touch him further."

No patriotic citizen, who had reached mature age during the last ten years of Lincoln's life, feels anything less than a sense of personal obligation and gratitude to the strong deliverer who served us in those bitter days. I speak for the generation that knew the agony of the First Bull Run. I speak for the generation that felt the deep religious joy of Richmond's fall. We of the North, who had lifted him from obscurity to place, and who were inclined, at times, to think him slow in heeding our behests, have come to feel that strength and not weakness dictated his delay. They of the South, who did their best to persuade themselves that he was a tyrant and a monster, now lift their voices to swell the

universal chorus of acclaim. A man of Peace, he had marshalled armies comparable in numbers with the hosts of Xerxes and Alexander and Hannibal and Cæsar. So blind was he to the honor of it all,—so insensible to pride,—that as often as a way seemed open to him by which he might delegate his Atlantean task, he sighed to be allowed to shift to other shoulders a burden which he felt and said was greater than Washington had been called to bear. Wielding an authority the most absolute in the whole range of Constitutional Administration, he subordinated self to duty always, and made the world to see and to know how greater than the conqueror that taketh a city is he who ruleth his own spirit. No pride of ancestry,—no Circe-promise that he might found a dynasty or a state, lured this man on. Nothing impelled him but the single wish that he might be helpful to his kind, and the natural ambition every good man feels to fill well the place where fate has put him. The debt due his memory from every citizen and from every soldier who prayed in that dark hour that the country might live, is a debt which cannot be exaggerated and will not be forgotten. Child of the Masses, lifted to command upon the shoulders of the Masses, he stands there,—simple—unpretentious—self-poised—genuine—sincere—the peer of princes—arbiter of peace and war—balancing in his hand the fate of peoples!

Lincoln reached the age of citizenship in 1830. What had been his special training, if any, for taking a man's part in government I shall consider later. Let me attempt first to outline the conditions with which he found himself surrounded in state and nation. Jackson was President. He was branding nullification as treason, and was making no secret of his purpose to hang the first nullifier who should commit an overt act. The Federalist Party, which had called the Union into being, had wrecked itself through its internal discords and its undue assumptions. Webster was at the zenith of his power, pronouncing his historic expositions of Constitutional Construction and of the value of the Federal Union. The protest against hide-bound dogma in both religion and politics was fast

making head. The great railroad-movement which was to create the West—hurrying into the unbroken prairie the old-world redundancy of population, to bring back to the sea-board for a foreign market the garnered products of their tillage,—was about to demonstrate that the upper valley of the Mississippi and its confluents, with its unprobed depth of alluvial deposit,—with its capacity for sustaining life almost without limit,—with its water-courses and great lakes,—with its untouched wealth of timber-lands and mineral resources,—was the natural Seat of Empire on this Continent.

Such was the atmosphere,—bracing and broadening,—from which Lincoln drew his early inspiration. Kentucky and Illinois, the states of his birth and later residence, touched both the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers, and Indiana, in which he passed a few years, on the way from his Kentucky birthplace to his home in Illinois, touched the Ohio. New birth of a new soil, the child drank in the physical not more than the political atmosphere of the new-born state. He was looking on at an Empire in the making. The systems of the elder world incline their peoples to leave, to favored orders of men, their political and religious concerns, and to limit their interests to industry and amusement. Not so with us. Every man-child born into these United States makes haste to take his part in the great drama of statecraft playing before his eyes. He plays at politics when barely out of skirts, as at a national game of which the counters are fortunes,—the prizes dignities,—the stake an Empire.

Lincoln found himself not ill-prepared to take his part,—the born subject of a dual citizenship, thrown into a rude and unformed society. The people of this country, in breaking away from old-world systems and traditions, had established for themselves two distinct repositories of supreme authority. For us, the powers of government did not find their way down through magistrates and dignitaries from a single heaven-anointed source. They were drawn directly from the sanction of the governed. Officials were agents of the people, answerable directly to the governed, and their powers returnable,

from time to time, to the people governed. Thus government was a limited agency, for securing certain well-defined requirements of the people, and was not in any sense a prerogative of the magistracy created for such temporary service. For certain broad, national concerns the people had constituted as their agent a federal organization. And for certain other much more numerous and intimate, but more limited concerns, the people, according to their locality, had constituted state organizations for their agents. These last represented the colonial settlements founded long before, and grown strong in local sentiment as well as in the military vigor learned in the rough school of Indian warfare and in struggles against the mother-land for an alloted share of autonomy. In its limited sphere, each government was sovereign and supreme, and they both equally drew their authority from the single undisputed source of power,—the people's will. Recognized attributes of sovereignity such as the power of life and death,—of eminent domain and taxation,—of repelling invasion and repressing insurrection, inhere in the States. Other recognized attributes of sovereignty, such as the making of treaties,—declaring war,—regulating inter-state and foreign trade,—were inhibited to the States and inhere in the Federal Union. All is delicately adjusted by written constitutions to be construed in the last resort by a Federal Court. While the original states of the sea-board antedated the Union and had created it, and while some of the Federalists of the constructive period, —living before the Union had been cemented in blood,—felt that, having made it, they could unmake it at their pleasure—for they had joined it, some of them, doubtfully and with much reluctance,—the states of the Northwest, on the other hand, had no origin anterior to the Federal Union. They were the very creatures of the Federal Union itself, looking to no earlier source,—never having recognized any protective power outside the Federal Government to which they could turn for help. Lincoln might have been counted among the founders of Illinois. When he went there he found little but hopeless debt, public works on paper, vast natural resources, exhaustless vigor and unbounded faith. Coin was a curiosity. Cured hams were a legal tender.

In 1830 an angry dispute was growing up between sections of the national domain, unsympathetic and a good deal unlike, but which had been forced into a common Federal bond by the imperious necessity for National Defense. The first defensive league had been consummated in 1774. The necessity was then perceived of bringing all the colonies without exception into a Federal bond. Failing this, those colonies withholding their assent would be free to open negotiations with a foreign enemy for a footing on this continent, and resistance to Great Britain must come to naught. To secure this unity, such concessions were made as were found indispensible to cementing a defensive union against Great Britain. One of these concessions related to slavery. Slavery, though discredited, was not then odious in any part of the world. It existed in every one of the colonies. The newspapers of New England and of the country at large are filled with announcements warranting this assertion, and there are standing in Massachusetts to-day Colonial meeting-houses in which special provisions made for the worship of slaves can still be traced. Many of the substantial stone fences marking the boundaries of early New England homesteads are the handiwork of slaves. Both Indian captives and imported West India negros had been bought and sold here from traditional times. But slavery was an exotic at the North. Nowhere were the blacks numerous enough to be seriously reckoned with as a social factor, and, being household servants, they were treated humanely.

In the Southern colonies Africans and their descendants constituted substantially the whole labor element of the section. The industries of the South lent themselves readily to negro labor, and the vast scale upon which their peculiar industries were conducted, as well as the climate of the region, fostered the system. Of course the blacks, now and then, escaped from this compulsory employment and sought refuge in the states where blacks were fewer and their labors lighter. Together with fugitive apprentices, and criminals who were fugitives from justice, these escaping slaves were included in a constitutional stipulation as between the colonies forming the Federal compact that

all fugitives of these three classes should be restored upon demand. While the promise of restoration on motion of the States was thought to be sufficient, and has proved to be ample, in the case of run-away apprentices and criminals, it was found necessary to pledge the intervention of the Federal Government in order to secure the rendition of fugitive slaves. Right or wrong, this provision was seen to be inevitable. Without it the ordinance of 1787, consecrating the whole Northwestern Territory to freedom, could never have been passed, nor could the Federal Union have been effected. But the underlying fact upon which rests the whole moral justification of the war which saved the Union must not be lost sight of. No principle of law or morals is better established than this, that contracts are to be construed and interpreted with a view to the conditions which surround the making of them. All thoughtful people, South as well as North,—the leading statesmen of the South more decidedly than any,—at that time regarded negro slavery in the South as an undesirable system, condemned by modern views of political economy and morals, and only waiting to be got rid of as rapidly as might be without undue violence to existing social and industrial demands. Accordingly the Constitution provided for the suppression of the slave-trade on and after an approaching date. It avoided the introduction of the word "slave," resorting, in every necessary reference to the indefensible system, to a cumbersome circumlocution. Jefferson in his draft of the Declaration had enumerated the forcing of slavery upon the Colonies as one of our grounds of complaint against Great Britain. Leading Southern men, in face of the archaic legislation of their states, and greatly to the discomfiture of adherents of the discredited form of labor,—the free negro was regarded as a nuisance and the intelligent negro as a menace,—in face of this opposition, leading public men of the South, among them Washington, persisted in freeing their slaves by will and providing for their instruction. But for the invention of the Cotton Gin, which suddenly made cotton-growing vastly lucrative, and built up a world-wide market for the product,—

it is not impossible that slavery at the South might have gradually yielded in the course of years to the advancing sense of humanity, and have been disposed of without violence, giving way to industrial systems in which the imported negroes and their descendants might have remained to till in peace the soil on which most of them were born, with at least as near an approach to justice and fair dealing as they now enjoy, and the South might have been spared the devastation, the madness of her dominant class invoked upon her head. But this was not to be.

Conceiving that while she enjoyed the control of the cotton-market of the world, she was superior to political dictation and almost, it would seem, to moral restraint, the united cotton-industry of the South faced squarely about,—defied the deliberate judgment of the civilized world pronounced in its arraignment of chattel-slavery,—and arrogantly proposed the indefinite extension and perpetuity of it, and the reöpening of the slave trade. This, with a reënforcing of the legal provisions exacted by the South of the Federal government, for the return of fugitive slaves escaping to the free states, and the proposal to enforce, in the common territories of the nation, the same property rights in slave property which were guaranteed in other kinds of property, brought on a crisis which could probably have been met in no other way but by a resort to arms. And the final verdict of history will record the fact that, in supposing they could, while consulting no interests or preferences but their own, turn their backs on their traditional distrust of slavery,—its thriftlessness, its immorality, its perpetual night-mare dread of servile insurrection,—that they could turn their backs upon all this at will, and force their fellow-citizens to help them extend and perpetuate the monstrous anachronism—a policy which united against them in advance the population of the North,—more than ready as it was for every consession compatible with manhood,—a population out-ranking them two to one in numbers, wealth, mechanical capacity, industrial development, general intelligence,—in every manly attribute except audacious courage,—in taking this fatal step, the Southern people will be found

to have committed the most stupendous folly which discredits the statesmanship of modern times.

The Cotton States entered upon the struggle with three distinct possibilities of success. They hoped for the intervention of England. They hoped for a political disruption of the North. They questioned the financial sufficiency of the Federal Government. I must not pause to discuss the grounds upon which these hopes were based. It was Lincoln's task to defeat them all. Who could say that a people impatient of national debt, and of direct taxation as was the America of 1860, would patiently, for years after the first flush of battle, subject its industries to the burden of an enormous tax? Who could say that the North, welded together by the first assault upon the Union, would hold itself together when the war, dragging along through varying fortunes of victory and defeat, should more and more take on that anti-slavery complexion which had been from the outset foreordained? Who could say that the governing class of England, bred to regard our Union as a rope of sand, and honestly supposing when they heard the signal-gun at Sumter that they were listening to its knell,—who could say that Monarchical England would suppress the longing to intervene in behalf of her natural ally, our baronial, cotton-growing South,—would suppress this natural longing through all the rasping irritations of a naval conflict,—through all the terrible pangs of the cotton-hunger that was paralizing her mills? While the North must maintain its solvency immaculate, and subsist its armies through the medium of crushing loans, the South, on the other hand, was under no such necessity. It was enlisted in a desperate undertaking, in which financial credit was a secondary concern, and in which the impressment of private property for public uses at once became the accepted resource. And, moreover, it had, as a momentary reliance to fall back upon, the great cotton-crop of 1860, so far as this could be smuggled through the blockade to England or could be sold through our lines to meet the daily necessities of the North, and this, while it lasted, furnished the sinews of war. Whether the North could maintain its political solidarity

was at all times in doubt. Every dubious or disloyal utterance finding its way into the northern press was reproduced without delay in the journals of the South. The hope of British aid, stimulated by the London Times which was known to be in touch with Palmerston and Russell,—the hope of British aid almost justified by the Trent Affair, and by the fitting out of the Alabama,—was only abandoned when English mill-owners had, perforce, found sources of a supply of cotton outside of the Confederacy.

Such in rough outline was the stupendous problem confronting Lincoln. He could not delegate it. If he failed to solve it, the country failed with him, and with him failed the experiment of representative democracy. In some ways, but not in all, his training had schooled him for the task. It was a task for which no man could be wholly fit. For no such task had ever before confronted mortal man. There were no precedents. His native vigor must lift him up to cope with the occasion. He must grow as the growing demands of his problem developed. He had ready to his hand, as a nucleus for the military force he was to need, a little standing army, honeycombed with treason in rank and file. He had for a navy with which to maintain the blockade of a coast-line longer than was ever before essayed, a few obsolete sea-craft, manned by officers and crews whose loyalty awaited an uncertain test. When he came to Washington from Illinois, charged to pick up and knit together the shattered fragments of the expiring administration, it was found unsafe for him to approach his capital by day. For temporizing and trifling in his utterances along the way he was harshly condemned when it would have been a fatal breach of trust to betray by a single word the solemn thoughts that were weighing down his soul. The actual condition of things at Washington was not suspected by the country at large. Ex-Governor Clifford and Ex-Attorney General Phillips, both of Massachusetts, were in Washington a month before Lincoln's accession to office, engaged in an effort to adjust, with Attorney General Stanton of Buchanan's cabinet, a disputed boundary between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. They found the Attorney-General of the

United States sleeping at night and quartered by day in his office, and barricaded, and every way prepared for the hourly-expected attack upon the archives of his department.

But at last Lincoln took the oath and found his lips unsealed. He gave utterance to a magnanimous appeal to the humanity and manhood of the warring states. If anything could have given pause to the madness of the Southern heart, that might have been hoped from Lincoln's words. Through him the North had spoken, and the great mass of moderate Northern men felt that their best thought had found voice at last. Events rushed on. South Carolina fired the signal-gun, precipitating upon the country a contest for which the Southern States had been for months prepared, and for which we of the North were so little ready, that our own Senator Wilson declared, in Mechanic Hall, at the close of the Presidential campaign that, inasmuch as he sat day by day, elbow to elbow, with Jefferson Davis in the Senate Chamber, he was able to say, and we might take it on his word, that the war threats were bluster and that there would be no fighting. But the war was upon us. Doctor Furness of Philadelphia, who had stood for years in the forefront of liberal thought in the Middle States, preached before the Barton Square Congregational Society on the Sunday after Sumter, and pictured the South as the spoiled child of the Federal household, needing vigorous discipline which he believed she was about to get.

Weeks were consumed in the government service, in separating those who did from those who did not regard the sanctity of an oath. Then came the mad rush to arms. Lincoln must not go too fast. He was no soldier. General Scott, the Nestor of the army, his natural adviser, was disqualified by years. To whom should he turn? He had made up his cabinet on a unique plan which showed his magnanimity, if nothing else. In order to unite around his administration the constituent masses of the Northern people, for he needed the support of all, he had invited to seats in his cabinet not only life-long political opponents who had lately become identified with the com-

mon movement against slavery-extension, but also personal rivals who had contested with him the nomination for the Presidency. This was a distinct demonstration of his mental fibre. Seward, perhaps his strongest opponent, and Chase, who had a powerful backing in the West, and Cameron of Pennsylvania, and Bates of Missouri, all found themselves among his official family, and the first months of the war were consumed in finding out how far the new President could trust his political rivals with his political secrets. He could see no factions—only his suffering country. All help was welcome, and all found their place. The Secretary of War made way for Buchanan's Attorney General, Stanton. Seward, perceiving that Lincoln and not he was to dominate the situation, became an invaluable aid. And in Chase, the President, absolutely lacking himself in the financial instinct, was fortunate in finding at the start a financial minister whom, personal ambitions aside, he could trust without reserve.

But campaigns must be mapped out and battles fought and at first Lincoln, in the selection of Commanders, applied much the same system which he had followed in the selection of his cabinet. It was the People's war,—not his, and wherever he could clearly discern a popular demand for the appointment of a General Officer, he made it with, at times, all too little regard for his own opinion of its fitness. Captains of capacity not only waited to be distinguished by events from the common mass. Captains of capacity had even to be created from the raw material. For all were alike unschooled in the grand strategy of continental warfare. While future heroes were making their dreadful mistakes and learning their lesson at a terrible expenditure of the best blood we had to give, it was Lincoln's fate to be super-adding to the agony of his self-distrust the crushing dread that the country's faith in his integrity might not bear the strain. But, from an early period of the war until his second election, the confidence of the masses of the North,—the affection of the soldiers he always had,—unmoved by the virulence of his critics and by his assumptions of power which nothing short of down-right necessity could excuse,—the confidence of the

people in his unselfish devotion to duty,—in his homely, genuine good-sense,—in his transparent frankness,—in his largeness of purpose,—in his instinctive weighing of conflicting interest and claims so that each might have his due, —in his all-embracing tenderness of heart,—this deep assurance of the highest attributes of statesmanship grew from day to day, and made it seem then, as it seems now, to be impossible that any other hand could have held the helm so well.

Lincoln was born in Kentucky, of parents who had drifted there from Virginia, of which Commonwealth Kentucky had been a province until the admission of the latter into the Union. The generations of Lincoln's ancestry, tarrying in Virginia, were not many, and before reaching Virginia they had been settled among the Dutch and Quakers of Pennsylvania and the Jersey Welshmen. Earlier than this they had traced back to New England. Lincoln is an honored name in Massachusetts, and a research now in progress is expected to vindicate the traditional claim that Lincoln's earliest American ancestor was a Pilgrim pioneer of the South Shore of Massachusetts Bay. The stay in Kentucky was brief. When he was but seven, the Lincolns made their way across the Ohio, into the free and fertile area of the great Northwest, making a few years' sojourn on their march through Indiana and finally striking root in Sangamon County in the Mississippi River-basin of Illinois. In Kentucky, as in Virginia, they had lived in what was nominally slave territory. Slavery was little more than a tradition in Kentucky. But the slightest taint of the pest was enough to pollute the social atmosphere. In no community where capital owns labor can free labor compete for employment or the self-respecting free mechanic lift his head. In Virginia and in Kentucky, the Lincolns were of that nondescript class which, lacking capital, owned little land and no slaves, and which, unable to command employment from the capitalists who owned both, enjoyed the consideration neither of master nor of slave. In Southern Indiana, where the Lincolns passed twelve years, and again in Illinois, they found themselves members of a new commu-

nity recruited largely from Kentucky, but forever exempt from the blasting touch of slavery by virtue of the Ordinance of 1787 which Essex County, let us remember it with pride today, had the chief share in securing. A few blacks, who had yielded to the loyal affection of their race, had followed their masters into the new territory, and, though moved by one of the noblest instincts of mankind, were instrumental, few as they were, in keeping alive the jealousies which poor white laborers are sure to entertain against a cheaper labor than their own. Thus the fast-growing populations of the Mississippi River-basin became the home of an inhuman hatred of the negro,—of antagonism to negro labor, and to every remote approach to industrial or social equality, in a society so crude as almost to lack distinctions of any other kind than those of color. Here on the Mississippi River-bank, not far from the homestead of the Lincolns, was the scene, soon after their arrival, of the ghastly murder of Lovejoy,—a crime destined to take on national importance, in that it unlocked the lips of Wendell Phillips. Here, a little latter, was the scene of the sojourn of Dred Scott and his Missouri master, from whose four years' stay on free soil the slave deduced a claim for the restoration of his natural rights, which betrayed the Chief Justice of the supreme tribunal of the country, then under the dictation of the Southern oligarchy, into the preposterous position, false in history as it was vile in morals, that, traditionally, from the settlement of the country, negroes had no rights.

This pronouncement, hopelessly unsound in law as it was seen to be, was a logical necessity of the attitude the Cotton States had assumed. It fixed the low-water mark of Southern retrogression. The alleged right of the master to the person and service of the slave rested upon nothing but superior force. Captives in war, since a prehistoric past, could either be dispatched or, if their lives were spared, could be held as slaves. To say that bondmen had no rights was to deny that they were human. A code that denied to human beings, because born in a certain social status, the right to their own muscles,—to their own earnings,—to their own children,—threw the

negro back on the natural law of self-protection and furnished every justification for the violence, the sleepless apprehension of which made a night-mare at times of Southern life,—made habitancy in some parts of the South like living on a slumbering volcano.

For years, the spokesmen of the South had allowed themselves to argue that their slaves were contented and devoted to the whites, and that the master-class had nothing to apprehend from them. Doubtless this was true of most of them, for most of them were well treated, and the loyal devotion they displayed throughout the war justified this confidence. But always there was an uneasy, threatening minority. The moment the agitation of the slavery issue became general and acute, the South, both in and out of Congress, showed an utter want of reliance on this ante-war philosophy. John Brown with his nineteen pikemen dealt it a death-blow. When he appeared at Harper's Ferry and invited the negroes of the region into a camp of refuge, panic was the only word which could describe the effect of his movement on Virginia,—although the blacks never evinced a willingness to join him. The prevailing expression throughout the South was one of dread of servile insurrection and of the horrors of San Domingo. The South seemed astounded, when the test was applied, to find how slight was its reliance on these old-time assurances. And this slavery, let it be noted, was the cherished —the much lauded, the peculiar institution of Southern publicists, in their adventure for spreading which over the free territory of Mexico and of the Louisiana Purchase, and wherever their greed for unexhausted acreage invited them, they proposed to make partners of the Northern States. Not only so, but they proposed also to employ us on their slave-hunts whenever their bondmen, taking the North Star for a compass, found their way to freedom,—an office which, at the South, stamped the brute who stooped to it with the execration and contempt of the whole Southern people.

Lincoln's youth and early manhood were employed in such struggles for self-help as his surroundings called for. He had lost his mother, a young woman of thirty-five,

when he was but nine, and, illiterate as she was, she had been able to add new meaning to the aphorism that great characters are not produced except under the smiles of a mother who is true to her best ideals. She had lived long enough to quicken the intelligence which made Lincoln see the sort of food his mental nature craved, and he was able, when far-advanced in his wonderful career, to say of her: "God bless my mother! All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to her." He had one elder sister,—there were no brothers,—and she died before the Lincolns reached Illinois. Hand in hand they had tramped the prairie each day, nine miles out and back, that they might not grow up unschooled. Singularly, while his early experience was in almost every way the opposite of Washington's, there is in their careers a point of contact. Both were surveyors of land. While Lincoln was piloting the river flat-boat and splitting fence-rails, he was at the same time imbibing principles and storing up decision. In one respect, at least, he had the best of training. He had mastered Euclid, and he had learned to face the issues which arose in his path, single-handed, and without recourse to advice or books. Of all the disputes arising among his fellows he was the accepted umpire, and in all the frequent attempts at overbearing assumption among his rude compeers he was the self-appointed champion and the self-commissioned law-giver, amply endowed with prowess to enforce his judgments. One of his earliest convictions was a detestation of slavery. This did not proceed from partiality for the negro. Free blacks, as we have seen, were no favorites in the prairie country. The general inclination of the Mississippi valley was to be rid of them. Until he reached New Orleans on his first river-passage Lincoln had seen little of slavery. Slave-auctions and the inherent abuses of the system confronted him here, and he received impressions which stood by him to the end. These he epitomized from time to time as occasion prompted. "If slavery is not wrong nothing is wrong"—"A house divided against itself cannot stand"—"No man is good enough to be the owner of anybody but himself."—But while these convictions strengthened with his years, so did the obvious correlative persuasion

that under our Constitution the Federal authority had nothing whatever to do with slavery in the several states. As well might the general government propose to extend its control over the distribution of property by will,—over the subject of marriage and divorce,—over the requisites for citizenship,—over the adjustment of local taxes,—over any other strictly state concern, as to attempt intervention in the relation of master and slave. The moment the general government assumes authority over issues from the outset reserved to the discretion of the States, that moment we subject all our traditional, internal state policies to the judgment and political action of the whole people of this imperial domain, and we of the older settlements, who have wrought out, through centuries of painful and laborious struggle, methods of our own,—school systems, and highway systems, and tax-adjustments, and municipal systems, and industrial systems, measurably satisfactory to ourselves,—do not care in every national election to submit these methods to review and reversal at the whim of Carolina Crackers or of the Cowboys of Colorado. The only safety for the future of America,—the only working plan of which there is a hope,—is that intended by the fathers and now insisted on by the Supreme Tribunal of the Nation, and this was Lincoln's lode-star.

Lincoln took an oath to safeguard the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution, in a way, respected slavery. Not only did the South insist upon this guaranty: Garrison and Phillips recognized the fact, and denounced the Constitution accordingly. But the weapon for dealing the death-blow to slavery, with which the North could not arm Lincoln, the South could and did furnish him. Lincoln was pledged to conserve the Union at all hazards. Whenever a military necessity in our struggle for the Union made it fitting to recognize the blacks in reducing the war resources of the enemy, or in reënforcing ours, the Constitution made it the President's duty so to recognize them. Lincoln, long schooled in readiness for the providential moment, was prompt to act. To have struck too soon would have been to alienate the border-slave-states and to have courted invasion He gave due

warning. The South must give up resistance or give up slavery. She chose the latter. She prepared to arm her blacks, and in taking that step she yielded the last issue. John Brown's raid,—the horrors of St. Domingo, had lost their virtue as a spell to conjure with.

Some of Lincoln's most trying experiences were reserved for the months between the autumn election which had won for his career the favoring judgment of the Nation and the ending of the war. The election made it clear that the war was to be fought out to its legitimate result. The Oligarchy of the South was doomed, and was only fighting for terms. The Mighty Father of Waters at last coursed through loyal territory to the sea, and by token of that fact the Confederacy was rent in twain. Supplies procured in Texas, or bought in Mexico,—arms and ammunition delivered from a foreign market in Mexico, could no longer cross the Mississippi into Confederate territory to subsist the South. The blockade was at last complete. Every Southern port was sealed. Sherman's march had shown the rebellion to be in a military collapse, and at the touch of his spear it had crumbled like an empty shell.

The end had come. The high hopes with which the South approached the crisis, encouraged for a while by temporary successes, had faded one by one. The resources which might well have sustained so brave a people through a shorter trial had proved inadequate to four years of war. Their means were exhausted, and so was their public credit. Only courage remained. The statesmen of the South had not authority enough to make honorable terms and enforce them upon their people. As late as October, 1864, their President was saying that he could not negotiate,—that the only way he knew of making our spaniels respect us was to whip them. His voice was still for war. No man had expressed a more persistent determination than he, to die in the last ditch. But when the last ditch was reached, under circumstances not altogether heroic, one look was enough to satisfy the fugitive War-Lord of the Confederacy that it offered no attractions as a final resting place for him. The Union

was restored and slavery was extinct. But the end was not to be reached without new trials of Lincoln's firmness and patience. New crops of dragons' teeth seemed to spring up about him. To a soul like his, almost morbidly sensitive to the demands of friendship, the suggestions his loyal supporters made of this or that impracticable short-cut to peace, when peace loomed up so near,—suggestions which could only be ignored,—cost him the keenest pangs. Greeley, loyal but erratic, who knew so much of the situation that he could not suppose it possible for any one to know more, pushed himself forward as a self-appointed umpire and had to be restrained. The conference at Norfolk, between the President and accredited agents of the South, threw upon Lincoln the onus of rejecting terms which were clearly inadmissible, at a moment when the Nation was so weary of the war that almost any terms accepted by the President would have been welcomed with acclaim.

Colonel Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, who had closed one of the noblest records of thirty years' service ever accredited to any man in the Senate of the United States, and had closed it because the Slave State he had honored for a generation felt the need of a spokesman who would bow lower than he to the demands of Slavery, visited Salem as the guest of Mayor Messervey, just before Secession came, and addressed us in the First Baptist Church on the topic of the hour. I never forgot the distinct portrayal he gave of the conditions which must follow the division of the Union by an artificial line of demarkation between the slave-states and the free. Would the Northern Mississippi valley ever submit to pay tribute to a foreign power planted at its mouth? If the South made it a grievance now that they got so little help in recovering fugitive slaves, what would happen when the fugitives became much more numerous and the hospitality of the North much more spontaneous? The Canada line would practically be brought down to Maryland and Kentucky. No line of forts, no military defenses would avail to keep the peace, and a protracted border-warfare would result, like that between England and Scotland, ending as all

such contests must, with the absorption of the weaker by the stronger power. Common necessities of defence no longer held the Union together. The time had gone by when there was anything to apprehend from outside interference. Many patriotic people were inclined to listen to the seductive plea that we might well say to the revolted States, "Wayward sisters! Depart in peace!" Nobody who heard Colonel Benton ever again supposed that the Mississippi river was to be anything but the water-way of a reünited nation or that the war would close except with every revolted State safe moored again at its anchorage within the Union.

One after another, Lincoln's troubles disappeared. The rebel Capital, for four years flaunting from her northern outposts the flag of treason almost in his face, at last succumbed. He entered Richmond on foot without ceremony, much more impressed with the prostration of all these high hopes,—with all this waste of splendid courage, than with any sense of personal exultation. To his great, yearning heart the Southern insurgents had never been other than his fellow-countrymen,—erring, faulty, they might be, but brethren still. He held certain definite conceptions of what steps it would be expedient to try next as the first essay in restoring the exhausted South. These were views which he could not abandon, for his whole life-schooling had led up to them. They were views in which he might hope to have the support of the saner element of Southern statesmanship as fast as that saner element was able to make itself felt at home. They were views which led him consciously away from the doctrinaire-school of statecraft,—the school of which Chase and Sumner stood forth as eminent exemplars,—and they were views which brought him day by day in closer touch with two of the purest patriots and profoundest statesmen developed by the war,—Senators William Pitt Fessenden and Lyman Trumbull. Our own War Governor had made himself so much more than a mere local magistrate that he was recognized, in company with Curtin of Pennsylvania and Morton of Indiana, as among the figures of national importance. And in laying down his official

functions at the end of the war, he expressed, in a farewell address, views which placed him by the side of the martyred Lincoln in the practical statesmanship which should have been applied to the reconstruction of the South. It was a crucial moment when the renascent Republic had need of all her sons.

But, whether supported or denounced, Lincoln was ready with the remedies and measures called for. He was neither hasty nor tardy. Tentative in his policy,—mindful of the terrible prostration under which the conquered sections of the country groaned,—prompt in his sympathetic devotion where help was needed, but by no means over-tender, nor reckless in his processes, he was fast coming to be accepted as the protector of the South and the one monumental figure in all the country in which combined the supreme qualities needed for rehabilitation. Thus the final summons reached him. The opening scene of reconstruction ended his career. If it could ever be said without hyperbole of mortal man, "No act of his life became him like the leaving of it,"—that man was Lincoln. If there be one sort of courage higher than all others, Lincoln showed the highest. He had risked all in an effort to save his country,—following out a line of policy which was ingrained in his nature and part and parcel of his substance. The end was clear in sight. The promised guerdon seemed within his reach. Yet he did not shrink from staking everything which wore the aspect of a personal triumph on the success of principles, odious though they were to some of his supporters, upon which his policies had rested and prevailed. Death came at a moment when he might well have been reposing on his laurels and have begun to look back with the gratifying sense of duty done upon a success without a parallel since Napoleon died. But no! He must push on. Dangers awaited him it might be, but duties also. While his country needed service which he believed he could perform, his labors were not done. There was no hesitancy.

"He either loves his fame too much,
"Or his desert is small,
"Who fears to put it to the touch,
"And win or lose it all."

New England and the North swarmed with stalwart young men whose social and industrial connections had been broken up by four years of service in the ranks, and who had observed, in their campaigning through the South, her affluence of natural resources—fertile lands, inviting the thrifty hand of Northern enterprize, and water-power running to waste down hillsides heavy with the greenery of virgin forests,—and having seen all this, thousands of the disbanded soldiers of the North were eager to pursue their fortunes there, rather than return to the old New England homesteads to grub a pittance from our rocky acres. The North was piled high with accumulated capital which had been employed in industries created by the war, but which suddenly found itself idle. This capital would have sought investment in a reviving South, and would have opened to that section a career of prosperity it had never known before, had not mismanagement North and South postponed it all for a generation. These glorious possibilities Lincoln foresaw and welcomed. But the stroke of the assassin had changed all. Treason had done its worst. Yesterday he was but one of thousands, struggling like the rest of us in a sacred cause. To-day his apotheosis had begun. What men liked in him they made haste to study and admire. What men disliked in him they made haste to forget. There was little for oblivion and much for glory. Lincoln is growing with the years. Until he died, Washington stood alone. We who knew him, and who took his hand, and heard his honest laugh, and saw the sparkle of his eye, must not be blamed if we failed to grasp at once, while he was near us, the grand proportions which the perspective of distance in time has opened to our ken. The man has never lived—not Columbus,—not George III,—not Franklin,—not Washington,—who has stamped himself more indelibly upon the future of this continent.

Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us, face to face.
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,—
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,—
Till the wise years decide.
Great Captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last Silence comes;
These are all gone, and standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,—
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man;
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise—not blame;
New birth of our new soil,—the first American!

NOTE ON THE ILLUSTRATION.

The frontispiece preceding this paper is taken from the famous Volk Bust of Lincoln, cast from the life-mask made at Springfield in June, 1860, just after his nomination for the Presidency. This particular copy was procured from the sculptor, Volk, by the painter, Ames, after Lincoln's death, and was used by him as the safest guide in painting, at the order of the Merchants of Boston, the portrait of Lincoln which hangs in Fanueil Hall. It was presented by the artist, Ames, to Mr. Rantoul, while he was collector of this port, and was left by him, as a *transmittendum*, at the Salem Custom-House.

[See the Century Magazine for December, 1881, New Series, Vol. II, p. 223: also Vol. III, p. 462.]

The autograph is reproduced, of its actual size, and is taken from the Commission issued to Mr. Rantoul as Collector of the Customs for this District, dated January 13, 1865. The Commission was signed by the President with his first name in full, which is a little unusual. It is countersigned: "W. P. Fessenden, Secretary of the Treasury."

Observances

By the Essex Institute

At the Tabernacle Church in Salem

February twelve, nineteen hundred and nine

Abraham Lincoln.

In Commemoration of the Centennial of the Birth of

Lincoln

Programme

Prelude in C Major . . . . *Bach*

HENRY WINSOR PACKARD, *Organist*

I

Whittier's Centennial Hymn

Our fathers' God! from out whose hand
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet to-day, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
To thank Thee for the era done,
And trust Thee for the opening one.

Here where, of old, by Thy design,
The fathers spake that word of Thine
Whose echo is the glad refrain
Of rended bolt and falling chain,
To grace our festal time, from all
The zones of earth our guests we call.

Oh! make Thou us, through centuries long,
In peace secure, in justice strong;
Around our gift of Freedom draw
The safeguards of Thy righteous law;
And, cast in some diviner mold,
Let the new cycle shame the old!

SALEM ORATORIO SOCIETY

II

Address by the Honorable Robert S. Rantoul

Programme

III

The Battle Hymn of the Republic

Read by MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on!

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps.
His day is marching on!

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal!
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on!"

SALEM ORATORIO SOCIETY

IV

Readings by the Honorable Alden P. White

From the Leave-taking at Springfield,
the Gettysburg Address and the
Second Inaugural.

Programme

V

"O Captain! My Captain!"

Verses by WALT WHITMAN

Music for this Occasion by JOSHUA PHIPPEN
Curator of Music at the Institute

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done!
The ship has weather'd every wrack,—the prize we sought is won!
The port is near,—the bells I hear,—the people all exulting,—
While follow eyes the steady keel,—the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead!

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells!
Rise up!—For you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills!
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding!
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning.
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer! his lips are pale and still!
My father does not feel my arm,—he has no pulse nor will!
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound,—its voyage closed and done!
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won!
Exult, O shores! and ring, O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

SALEM ORATORIO SOCIETY

Postlude . . . . . *Guillemant*

HENRY WINSOR PACKARD, *Organist*